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SUBJECT: SERBIA: INPUT FOR OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING

REF: STATE 60838

11. (SBU) In response to reftel request for input, post suggests the following areas of concern that the U.S. delegation to the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) might wish to raise:

-- The remaining three fugitive war crimes suspects under indictment by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) -- Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, and Goran Hadzic -- remain at large. ICTY chief prosecutor Serge Brammertz told the UN Security Council in June that he believed Serbia could do more to capture these fugitives.

-- Ambassador Richard Williamson mentioned Serbia's restrictive 2006 Religion Law at the 2007 HDIM. Parliament has not amended the controversial law, which recognizes only seven "traditional" churches and requires all other religious communities to reregister to receive official recognition, and the government continues to apply it arbitrarily. The Religion Ministry has refused to register many minority churches, which have difficulty operating without official recognition. Such religious communities have experienced increasing incidence of vandalism against their houses of worship -- often without appropriate police response.

-- There continues to be a lack of durable solutions for the large numbers of internally displaced persons in Serbia.

12. (SBU) The U.S. delegation to HDIM should also note progress in the following areas and encourage the government of Serbia to continue improvements:

--The Serbian government has a national strategy for judicial reform, and the parliament has passed most of the implementing legislation required by the 2006 constitution. These changes are needed to improve the efficiency, independence, and institutional strength of the judicial system. We should encourage the GOS to implement the legislation as quickly as possible once a new government is formed.

--On June 11, police arrested Stojan Zupljanin, one of the four remaining ICTY indictees at large. In 2007, the government assisted in the arrests of Zdravko Tolimir and Vlastimir Djordjevic. The government continued investigations and prosecutions of several organized crime and war crimes suspects despite numerous anonymous threats to judges and prosecutors.

--The Serbian government made strides in addressing corruption in the police and the judiciary. The Internal Control division gained increased authority to investigate abuses, and it initiated disciplinary proceedings against at least 100 officers in 2007. Also in 2007, the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of a former Supreme Court judge for bribery, the first final verdict in a high-level corruption case.

--The Serbian government has been making significant efforts to comply with the minimum standards for combating trafficking in persons, including training law enforcement in victim identification, providing services to victims, and investigating and prosecuting traffickers, including a deputy public prosecutor

accused of complicity in trafficking.

--The Serbian government held both presidential and parliamentary elections in 2008, which the OSCE assessed as being in line with international standards and conducted professionally.

PEDERSON